

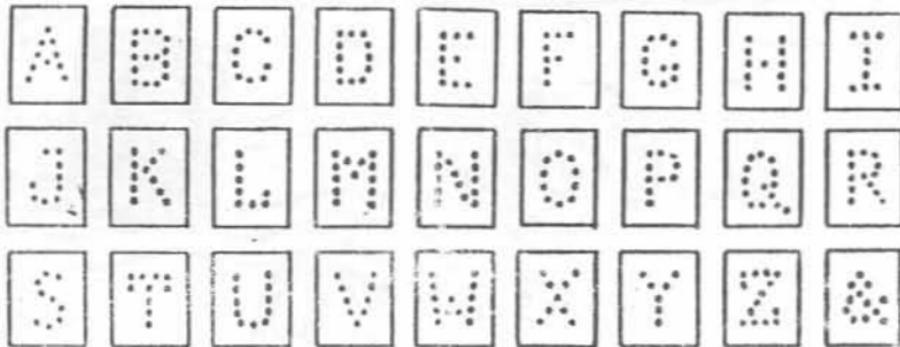


The POKO perforating machines were made by the POKO company in Germany starting during the first decade of the 20TH Century. I do not have enough information at hand to give an accurate starting year. This machine was set up to take large rolls of stamps (500 to 5,000 stamp rolls) and was designed to perforate and affix the stamps to envelopes. The machines were designed to take 3, 5 or even 7 rolls of stamps and were driven by electric motors. This is the only type of coil stamp affixing machine that also perfinned the stamps as a part of the process affixing them to the cover. The others, such as FIXO and MULIPOST machines used coil rolls that had already been perforated with initials.

These machines were in very heavy usage in Germany with probably over 2,000 users, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Denmark, and Great Britain. Other countries show up with POKO patterns, but only infrequently and they are usually European countries.

The Netherlands Postal Department even issued special perforated stamps in coils for the POKO machines. These are the syncopated perforation varieties of the Netherlands.

The POKO Standard Alphabet



The early POKO machines did not use a standard alphabet and can be determined by the following indicators. The grouping of letters is similar to the standardized alphabet usually toward the bottom of the stamp, and there is often one cut edge on the stamp where the machine separated it from the coil. It is extremely unlikely that you will ever find a double impression of a POKO perfin.

The standardized alphabet seems to have come into being shortly after World War I. In the central European countries, especially Germany, the use of POKO machines is uncommon after 1941. It seems that most of these machines were destroyed during scrap metal drives for the German war effort.

In Great Britain there seem to be some machines still in use at least through the early Machin issues. There are spans of usage that run well over 40 years.

The illustrations of the POKO machine advertisement and the standard alphabet were taken from *The Perfin Society Bulletin*, No. 256, p. 16. A majority of the information for this article was gleaned from articles by Roy Gault in *The Perfin Society Bulletin* (Great Britain).